

Agenda

Downtown Economic Growth Authority

Board of Directors



City of Kalamazoo

Monday, November 17, 2025

3:00 PM

Main Conference Room at Community Planning and Economic Development

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of the Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board on October 20, 2025. (**Action: Motion to approve**)

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Financial Report - September 2025 (**Action: Motion to accept the September 2025 Downtown Economic Growth Authority financial statement**)
2. Beats on Bates 2025 Presentation - *Kim Guess, event coordinator*
3. Downtown Report

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Downtown Branding (**Action: Motion to Approve the Downtown Kalamazoo Branding as recommended by Events and Marketing Committee and presented by a5 Branding and Digital**)
2. 2026 Beats on Bates Agreement (**Action: Motion to Authorize the Board Chair to Amend and Extend the Beats on Bates Agreement with Guess Who's Dancing Fitness, LLC for a period of one year in consultation with the Authority's legal counsel**)
3. Downtown Parking Plan Update
4. 2026 Board and Committee Meeting Calendar (**Action: Motion to approve the**

**Downtown Economic Growth Authority 2025 Board and Committee
meeting calendar as presented)**

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

H. ADJOURNMENT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2025, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Jessica Thompson, Stanley Steppes, Cheng Kidd Sun

STAFF: Rebekah Kik (Deputy City Manager), Erin Hahn (Community Investment Administrative Assistant), Jessica Wood (Attorney), Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor)

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR AARDEMA CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:03 P.M.

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Jessica Thompson, Stanley Steppes, Cheng Kidd Sun

EXCUSED ABSENCE: None

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: None

THE OCTOBER 20, 2025 ATTENDANCE, INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, IS RECORDED.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

DIRECTOR STEPPES MOTIONED TO ADOPT THE OCTOBER 20, 2025 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY AGENDA. DIRECTOR THOMPSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 15, 2025 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY MEETING. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. Downtown Branding Update (a5 Branding & Digital)

A5 presented updates on the downtown branding project and gathered final input from board members. Discussion centered on ensuring that the new downtown brand connects meaningfully with citywide identity and neighborhood initiatives, while still maintaining its distinct focus on downtown. Members emphasized the value of visual and thematic cohesion between the downtown district and surrounding neighborhoods, especially through shared

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2025, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

design elements, construction signage, and storytelling that highlight community connections across Kalamazoo.

Several members noted the importance of balancing consistency with neighborhood individuality, acknowledging that areas such as Vine, Edison, and Winchell take pride in their own strong local identities. Participants agreed that while downtown branding should remain distinct, opportunities to align messaging and cross-promote neighborhood events and businesses could strengthen citywide economic vitality and civic pride.

a5 Branding & Digital, alongside the Events & Marketing Committee, will incorporate feedback into final design refinements, brand guidelines, and rollout planning. The committee will reconvene November 3 to review updates, with a full board presentation anticipated later in November. Initial brand teasers will appear during the holiday season through subtle design nods before the formal launch.

Board members also discussed long-term marketing opportunities, including regional outreach to Chicago-area visitors, leveraging Discover Kalamazoo's tourism channels, and positioning downtown as a weekend destination supported by broader community experiences. The group expressed overall satisfaction with the brand direction and praised a5 and the Events & Marketing team for their professionalism and collaborative approach throughout the process.

b. Financial Report – August 2025

In August 2025, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority reported no new revenue, keeping year-to-date revenue at \$928,887. Expenses totaled \$72,330, driven mainly by two months of the Ambassador Program and Bigbelly services, along with costs for consulting, community promotion, memberships, and professional development. Year-to-date expenses stand at \$445,723.

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST, 2025 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENT. DIRECTOR THOMPSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2025, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

c. Downtown Report

Deputy City Manager Rebekah Kik presented the downtown report, highlighting September Downtown Dollars program activity, which totaled \$285, with \$1,485 redeemed across 14 businesses. Year-to-date, 32 businesses have redeemed downtown dollars. She also noted the ongoing economic vitality study and encouraged downtown businesses to complete the survey.

Kik drew attention to the ambassador program and recent efforts supporting mall maintenance and the North Mall event, including the event center ribbon cutting. She discussed upcoming projects with Landscape Forms for site furnishings, emphasizing the potential for a long-term partnership that benefits downtown branding and local employment. Kik noted coordination with the city to ensure compliance with policies and maximize visibility for Landscape Forms as a local partner.

Additional updates included successful downtown events, such as the Kalamazoo Candle event, the Arcadia Creek Festival Place designs, and upcoming holiday events. Committee activities were reviewed: the Events and Marketing Committee worked on downtown branding standards, the Business Recruitment Committee created a marketing piece to share with brokers statewide to promote downtown Kalamazoo, and the Clean and Green Committee reviewed mall and Bates Alley maintenance needs.

Kik also provided a parking system update, noting ongoing collaboration with the city, occupancy studies, and the plan to roll out changes at the beginning of the year to ensure clear communication with business owners. Emphasis was placed on marketing, communications, and ensuring parking remains user-friendly while sustaining downtown economic vitality.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

a. 2026 Downtown Economic Growth Authority Budget

Board members agreed that the 2026 budget, which has been presented to the Board on several occasions, is ready for approval and expressed support for hiring an additional staff member in the coming year.

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

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DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTONED TO APPROVE THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY 2026 BUDGET. DIRECTOR STEPPES SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

None.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 P.M.

**Downtown Economic Growth Authority
September 2025 Financial Summary**

In September, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received no revenue, leaving the year-to-date revenues to \$928,887.

September expenses totaled \$42,827. Key expense categories included: **Professional and Contractual Services (-\$700)** for write-off of 2020 outstanding checks that could not be escheated due to missing documentation; **Consulting Services and Fees (\$10,063)** for a5 Branding & Digital agreement; **Legal Services (\$828)**; **Professional Development (\$1,387)** for lodging during International Downtown Association Annual Conference; and **Administrative Fees (\$31,250)** for Q3 City Service Agreement Fees.

Year-to-date expenses total \$488,551.

Contract and Agreement Snapshot (see full table below) includes agreements the DEGA is currently entered into and the contract period.

Contract and Agreement Snapshot		
Contractor	Contract Description	Contract Period
Bee Joyful Shop	Marketing Grant Agreement	March 2025 – September 2025
Big Belly Solar	Bigbelly Units	December 2021 – May 15, 2028
<i>Block by Block</i>	<i>Ambassador Program Agreement</i>	<i>October 2025 – Sept. 2028</i>
City of Kalamazoo	Service Agreement	February 2024 – February 2027
City of Kalamazoo	Loan Agreement	Dec. 2024 – Dec. 2035
Guess Who’s Dancing Fitness	Beats on Bates	February 2025 – Dec. 2025
Maestro, LLC	Website Hosting & Maintenance	January 2025 – December 2025

Downtown Economic Growth Authority
Statement of Activity
9/30/2025

Total Available Cash 733,272

	2025 Budget	September	2025 YTD Actuals
Revenues			
Taxes	883,600		874,337
Other Revenue			-
Private Contributions and Sponsorships	21,700		1,700
Contributions from COK	40,000		40,000
Contributions from Solid Waste Fund	32,000		-
Contributions from Grants	50,000		-
Transfers			-
Charges For Services			-
Interest And Rentals	-		12,850
Total Revenues	1,027,300	-	928,887
Expenses			
Operating Supplies	2,004		298
Professional And Contractual Services	502,448	(700)	253,663
Solid Waste Disposal	7,500		2,613
Communication And Network Services	576		-
Repairs And Maintenance Services	2,000		455
Consulting Services And Fees	55,150	10,063	37,653
Audit Fees	13,800		12,800
Legal Services	30,000	828	10,486
Memberships And Subscriptions	3,000		2,538
Professional Development	13,000	1,387	6,794
Administrative Fees	125,000	31,250	93,750
Promotion And Advertisting	10,000		-
Contribution To General Fund	20,000		-
Community Promotion	114,850		67,500
Interest Expense - Notes Payable	52,400		-
Total Expenses	951,728	42,827	488,551
Revenues Less Expenses	75,572	(42,827)	440,337

Notes:

Long Term Debt:

Mavcon Agreement	TBD
City of Kalamazoo	1,060,000

Professional And Contractual Services:

	September	2025 YTD Actuals
Recycling Services - BIG BELLY SOLAR LLC		28,600
Ambassador Services - BLOCK BY BLOCK		225,763
TOTAL	-	254,363

Community Promotion:

Beats on Bates Events - Sponsorship		50,000
Bee Joyful - Social Media Marketing & Mgt		10,000
Caribbean Festival Sponsorship- Xperience Inc		5,000
2025 Canadiana Fest		2,500
TOTAL	-	67,500

NOVEMBER 2025 UPDATE

Downtown Kalamazoo

Downtown Kalamazoo: Active & Advancing This Month

■ \$705

Downtown Dollars Spent

■ 420 pounds

Litter Picked Up



New Location, Same Dedication

Downtown Kalamazoo welcomes a major reinvestment this month as 1st Source Bank celebrated the grand re-opening of its new office at 113 E. Michigan Avenue. The expanded space more than doubles the bank's downtown footprint, underscoring its ongoing commitment to serving the community and supporting a vibrant city center.

The ribbon-cutting, held on November 3, marked a new chapter in the bank's more than 160-year legacy. With \$9.1 billion in assets and operations across the region, 1st Source Bank remains the largest locally controlled financial institution in the northern Indiana-southwestern Michigan area—continuing its mission of helping clients build wealth, find security, and pursue their goals.

This investment not only strengthens 1st Source's presence downtown, but also adds to the growing momentum of new openings and reinvestments shaping Kalamazoo's economic landscape.

Business Recruitment Marketing Outreach

This month's feature story making the Downtown Strategic Plan real.

This month, we advanced a key priority of the Downtown Strategic Plan by launching a new business recruitment marketing piece showcasing downtown Kalamazoo's strong market fundamentals—1.4 million annual visitors, a growing residential population, major infrastructure investments, and a thriving talent base.

The piece communicates a clear message to prospective businesses and brokers: downtown Kalamazoo is year-round, innovative, easy-going, and growing.

In the coming weeks, we will distribute it to groups and individuals in Detroit, Grand Rapids, and across the region to support targeted recruitment and strengthen our pipeline of new downtown investment.

Built for Business

Downtown is a launchpad for growth—where businesses are rooted, visible, and thriving.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Built for Business

Recruitment Marketing Piece

In progress

- Marketing piece produced and printed; mailing in process

Launch Business Newsletter

Completed

Downtown Dollars

In October, Downtown Dollars sales totaled \$895. At the same time, \$705 was redeemed at 9 businesses downtown. Year to date, 32 businesses have redeemed Downtown Dollars.

Month	# of Businesses that Redeemed DT\$ (% of total)	Total Sold	Total Spent
January	20 (38%)	\$935	\$1,785
February	18 (34%)	\$620	\$850
March	17 (30%)	\$785	\$1,190
April	23 (41%)	\$900	\$2,740
May	19 (34%)	\$3,740	\$1,425
June	16 (28%)	\$1,450	\$1,045
July	13 (23%)	\$580	\$915
August	23 (46%)	\$12,255	\$4,220
September	14 (28%)	\$285	\$1,485
October	9 (19%)	\$895	\$705
2025 TOTAL	32 (65%)	\$22,445	\$16,360

Program Life Stats

\$532K
SOLD

\$371K
SPENT

\$138K
IN CIRCULATION

Program led by: Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor); Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Business Recruitment & Retention

- Discussed new businesses, relocations and vacancies
- Finalized mailing list

Economic Vitality Study

A collaborative research initiative between the City and WMU designed to better understand the economic health of Downtown Kalamazoo. The study aims to evaluate short- and long-term impacts of major downtown infrastructure projects, business activity trends, and the effectiveness of public investments.

Survey to downtown businesses and residents/visitors closed in early November.

Study led by: Center for Transportation and Livability at Western Michigan University – Dr. Jun Oh with City staff Christina Anderson (Planning); Dennis Randolph (Public Services); Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator); and Rebekah Kik (City Manager Liaison)



Southwest Michigan First Chamber
**Downtown Kalamazoo
Business Townhall**

January 2025

180 East Water Street
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Clean, Safe & Welcoming

Downtown is a place you want to be—inviting, well cared for, and safe for everyone.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Clean, Safe & Welcoming

Ambassador Program Agreement

Completed

New Ambassador Program contract started Oct. 1, 2025.

- October - December 2025 hours of operation:
 - Sunday & Monday: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 - Tuesday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
 - Friday & Saturday: 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.
- In 2026, Ambassador hours of operations will shift to
 - **Off Peak (Nov. 1 - April 14):** 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 - **Peak (April 15 - Oct. 31):** Sundays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, Fridays & Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Bigbelly Expansion

Completed

The Bigbelly expansion effort is completed (mostly!) We are still coordinating a handful of site preparations so that we can install five remaining units. Additionally, the replacement unit for the one damaged earlier this year, is expected to arrive in November.

With the expansion in the rearview, we still have some efforts related to Bigbelly underway:

- Integration of waste audit findings into developed signage and messaging by Bigbelly units.
- Disposal of traditional green units

Mall Maintenance Agreement Update

In progress

Staff are collaborating with City partners to modernize the 2009 Mall Maintenance Agreement, updating both the division of responsibilities and cost allocations. A draft scope and cost estimate are prepared. City will continue contributing at the \$59,210 amount in 2026.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Clean & Green

No meeting held in October 2025. Next meeting scheduled for November 26.



Ambassador Program

October activity reflected the shift into fall operations, with Ambassadors focused heavily on leaf collection as trees across downtown began to drop at the end of the month. Two new team members, Marquis and Summer, joined the crew and quickly integrated into daily operations. Ambassadors collected 4,925 pounds of trash, 1,375 pounds of recycling, and 420 pounds of litter, while also removing 28 instances of graffiti and providing 21 hospitality assists.

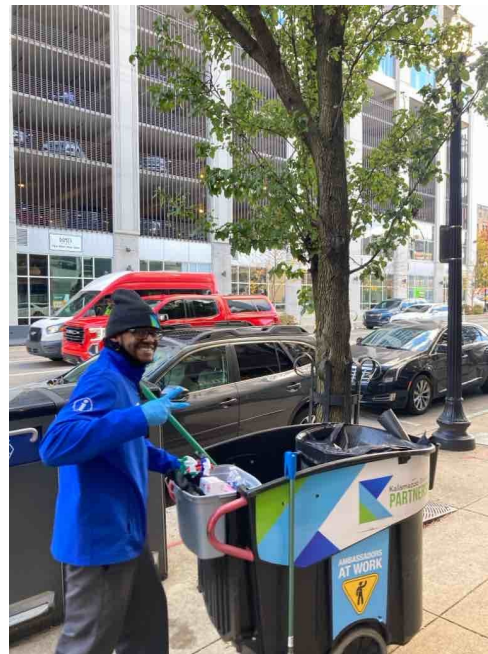
➤➤➤ **Full October 2025 Report on following pages**

Program led by: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

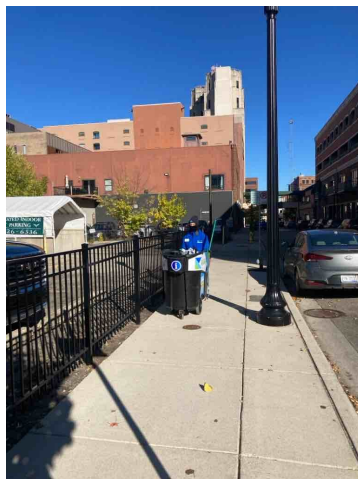
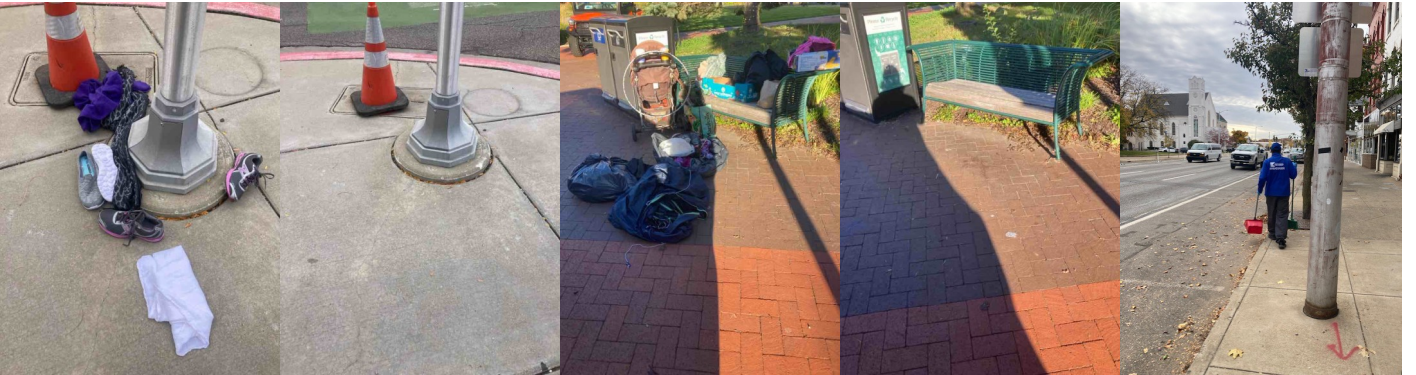
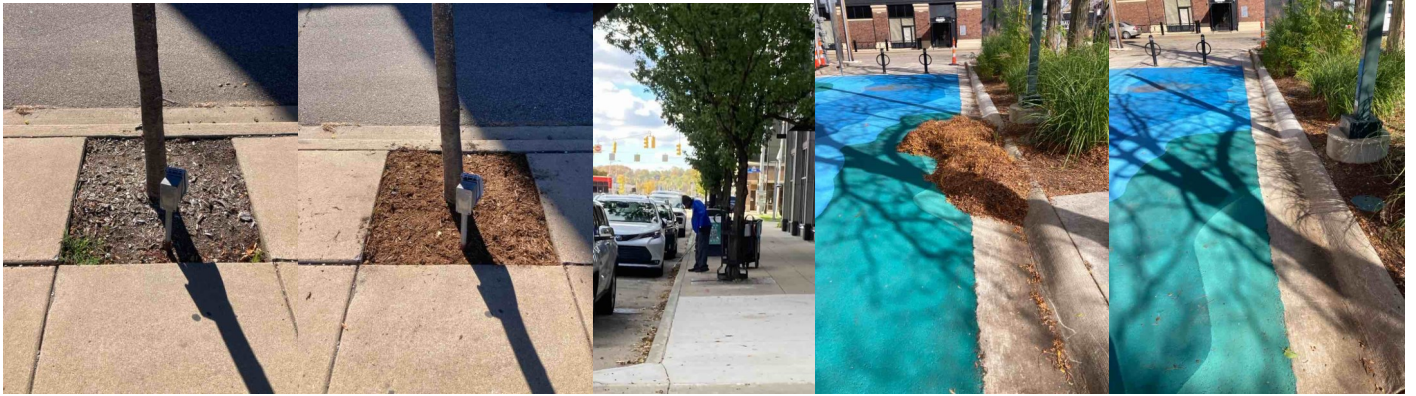


DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO

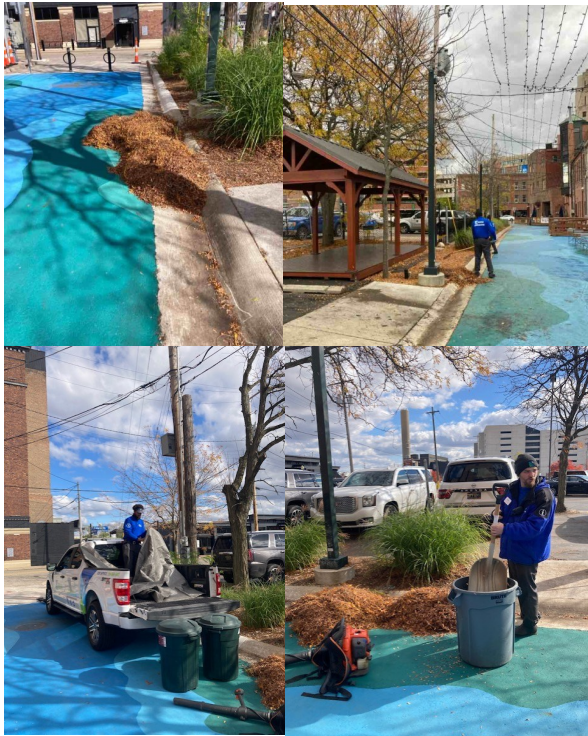
AMBASSADOR PROGRAM OCTOBER 2025 REPORT



AROUND TOWN IN OCTOBER



OCTOBER 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Fall is here!

Fall is here and with that comes leaf collection. We enjoyed really nice weather in October and the trees held onto their leaves a little longer. However by the end of the month there were plenty of leaves on the ground to keep us busy. Its all hands on deck for leaf collection until the snow flies.



New Team Members





We welcomed two new members to our team in October. Marquis and Summer joined us and have hit the ground running. If you see Marquis or Summer in the field say hello (if they don't say hi first).

October 2025 Stats By Zone


	East	Kalamazoo Mall	North	West	Total
CLEANING					
Abandoned Property	63	45	4	7	119
Area Cleaned	7	15	2	2	26
Biohazardous Material	30	4	5	1	40
Restroom Cleaned/Stocked	49				49
Graffiti - Removed	21	5		2	28
Lawn Care (hours)					0
Leaf Removal (hours)	11	11			22
Power Washing (hours)					0
Snow Removal (hours)					0
Litter (lbs)	200	40	155	25	420
Trash (lbs)	1575	2225	475	650	4925
Recycling (lbs)	350	750	175	100	1375
Flower Watering (gallons)				120	120
Weed Abatement (block faces)					0
Special Project (hours)	6				6
HOSPITALITY					
Business Contact		5			5
Hospitality Assistance	12	2	2	5	21
SAFETY					
Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use	2				2
Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use					0
Needles Found	3	1			4
Panhandling - Aggressive					0
Panhandling - Passive					0
Public Defecation/Urination	1	1		1	3
Safety Escorts			2		2
OUTREACH					
Transient	44	13	8	6	71
Unhoused/Sleeping	84	4	8	4	100
Unsheltered Relocation	1				1

KDP Zone Map


KDP Zones

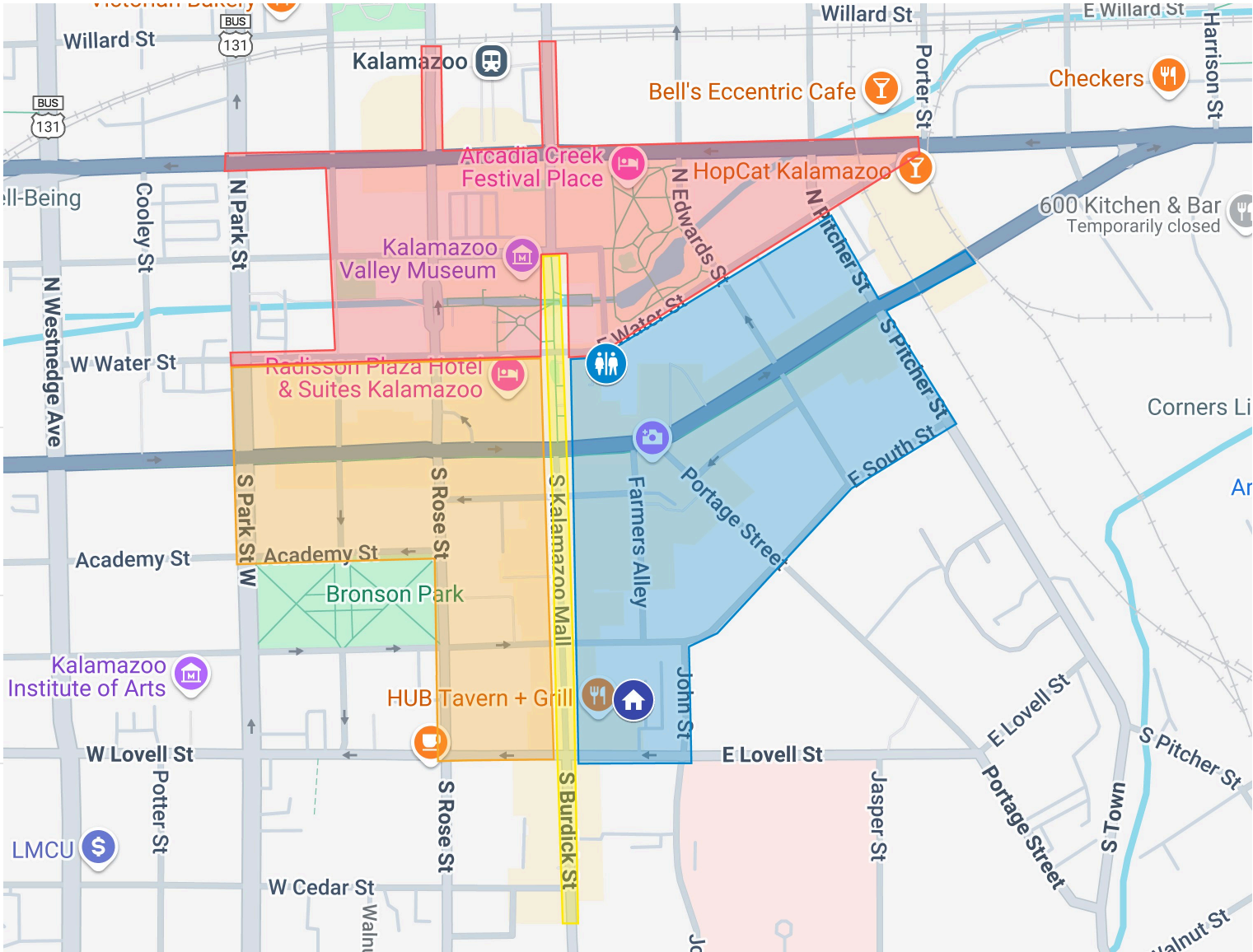
-  Kalamazoo Mall
-  North
-  West
-  East

Restroom

-  Portland Loo

Operations Center

-  Operations Center



2025 STATISTICS

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
CLEANING													
Abandoned Property	119	201	301	433	276	215	241	114	102	119			2121
Area Cleaned	27	39	105	43	47	38	40	24	33	26			422
Biohazardous Material	36	40	42	56	59	28	30	19	27	40			377
Restroom Cleaned/Stocked	23	41	50	55	58	56	63	57	38	49			490
Graffiti - Removed	20	31	95	103	53	64	37	51	18	28			500
Lawn Care (hours)													0
Leaf Removal (hours)	6	4	10		6	3	2	5		22			58
Power Washing (hours)				44	51				3				98
Snow Removal (hours)	122	38											160
Litter (lbs)				1175	575	200	525	350	125	420			3370
Trash (lbs)	6800	5775	8425	10200	9225	11325	11275	8400	6335	4925			82685
Recycling (lbs)								575	1500	1375			3450
Flower Watering (gallons)						794		484	396	120			1794
Weed Abatement (block faces)				11	10	30	9	4	1				65
Special Project (hours)		1	9		30	32			4	6			82
HOSPITALITY													
Business Contact	27	41	16	18	4	7	1	3	1	5			123
Hospitality Assistance	43	25	41	47	33	59	49	30	21	21			369
SAFETY													
Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use	11	12	12	41	7	6	7	13	5	2			116
Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use			7	11		6		9	2	0			35
Needles Found	5			7	8		7	2	1	4			34
Panhandling - Aggressive				1	1			0	1	0			3
Panhandling - Passive		1		1	7	1	2	0	0	0			12
Public Defecation/Urination	1					1		0	1	3			6
Safety Escorts	1	8	1	3			1	1	1	2			18
OUTREACH													
Transient	28	24	53	114	144	116	92	53	52	71			747
Unhoused/Sleeping	110	94	206	296	157	137	112	84	57	100			1353
Unsheltered Relocation	30	9	12	28	4	4	6	7	0	1			101

Place with Purpose

Downtown is shaped with intention—where every corner, plaza, and park reflects community and connection.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Place with Purpose

Identify Role in Downtown Placemaking

In progress

- Bates Alley Parklet Policy Committee met in November to discuss potential pathways; consultation with legal and partners continues.

Begin Downtown Design Guidelines Effort

In progress

- Landscape Forms discussion continue on South Kalamazoo Mall existing and future site furnishings



Arcadia Creek Festival Place

Turning Plans into Place

The City of Kalamazoo is advancing the redesign of Arcadia Creek Festival Place – transforming it into a welcoming, flexible space for year-round community life. The preferred plan, shared at the September 30 open house and shown above, envisions a park that supports both quiet reflection and large-scale events with improved accessibility, sustainability, and amenities.

Key features include flexible lawns and plazas, event infrastructure, enhanced walkability, and design for all ages and abilities.

The \$16 million project includes a \$4.6 million Phase I investment, with \$6 million in pending grants. Design and bidding are underway this fall, with construction anticipated to begin in early 2026 (weather dependent).

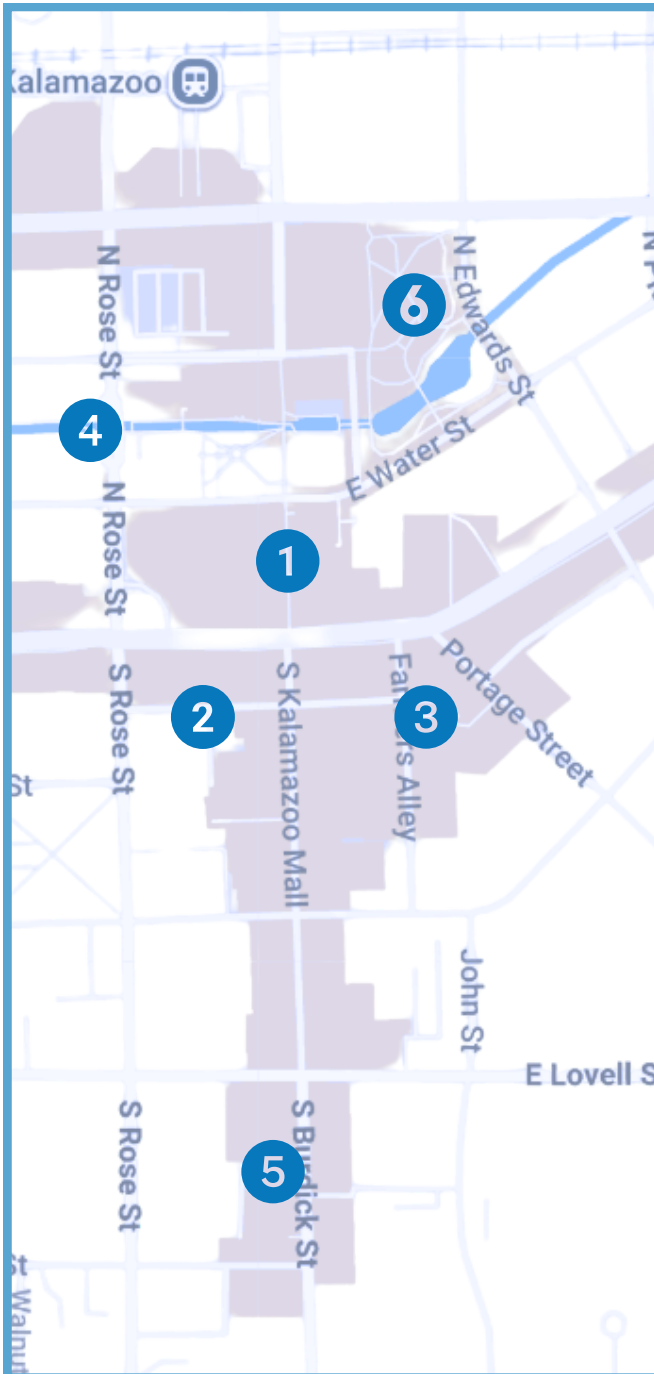


Portland Loo

To address the need for additional public restrooms downtown, the Kalamazoo City Commission approved the purchase of a Portland Loo in early June 2025. The second Loo will be installed next to the existing Loo. The Loo was shipped and arrived at City facilities in October 2025. The contract for construction has been awarded, and the planned schedule indicates that the unit will be open and available for use by the end of 2025.

Downtown Placemaking

Downtown Placemaking seeks to add to the vibrancy with another alley activation, plaza redesigns that act as connectors, and enhancing the experience of the Kalamazoo Mall as a more active and engaging place.



Project led by: Rebekah Kik (Deputy City Manager), Christina Anderson (City Planner, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Economic Development), Patrick McVerry (Parks and Recreation); Dennis Randolph (Public Services), and Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

- 1 North Kalamazoo Mall**
Construction project - pending federal grant approval
- 2 Exchange Place**
Mural project - pending property owner approval
- 3 Farmer's Alley**
Project is moving forward with construction documents to improve the concrete plaza, lighting, and landscaping.
- 4 Rose Street Plaza**
Project is moving forward with construction documents to improve the concrete plaza with furniture and landscaping. Coordination currently underway with adjacent property owners to partner on improvements on the public/private areas.
- 5 South Burdick (Lovell to Cedar)**
Currently on hold awaiting budget or grant opportunity.
- 6 Arcadia Creek Festival Place**
ACFP is undergoing a major renovation to improve infrastructure such as electrical and landscaping, supported by \$3.6 million in grants from the MEDC and City Commission, with additional funding being pursued for the \$14M project.

The site will be closed down beginning in December 2025.

Streetwise & Connected

Downtown is a place that moves with people—intuitive, walkable, and easy to explore.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Streetwise & Connected

Map Public Realm Assets

In progress

- **Completed:** light pole banners; Bigbelly
- **Assigned:** electrical outlets; benches & tables
- **Not Started:** bike racks/corrals; wayfinding; planters

Identify Fund Opportunities for Wayfinding

Ongoing

Kalamazoo Streets for All

Kalamazoo Streets For All is a lane conversion project that will transform downtown Kalamazoo into a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant destination that offers safe travel for all modes of transportation.

Updates can be found at: <https://www.kalamazoo.org/Community/Projects/Streets-for-All>



Project led by: Rebekah Kik (Deputy City Manager), Christina Anderson (City Planner, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Economic Development), and James Baker (Director, Public Services) with Consultants from Progressive AE, C2D, and Wightman Engineering



Downtown Parking Plan

The Parking Blueprint is organized into four sections defined by the following shared strategic objectives: (1) expanding parking supply/capacity; (2) managing parking demand; (3) improving/expanding mobility options; and (4) improving parking operations.

As part of the City's broader Parking+ Blueprint, on-street parking changes are rolling out this fall to create a more reliable and flexible system. The changes include replacing outdated meters with kiosks that allow multiple payment options, lowering rates on some blocks, and adding accessible spaces throughout downtown.

Note: the 12 blocks currently proposed to change from free to paid parking are under active reconsideration, and there could be changes to what is currently proposed for these blocks.

Vibrant & Visible

Downtown is unmistakable—distinct in identity, celebrated in stories, and recognized for its energy and edge.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Vibrant & Visible

Downtown Brand Identity

In progress

Final design options reviewed by Events & Marketing Committee in November. Recommendation advanced to DEGA Board of Directors for approval.

Events & Marketing Sponsorship Policy

Completed

Events & Marketing Sponsorship Policy and Application approved by DEGA Board at August 2025 meeting. Application form updated and past applicants and recipients notified of updated process. Next deadline is January 15 for Q2 2026 events.

Access sponsorship packet [here](#).

Downtown Banner Program

In progress

- Awaiting final brand identity to begin discussions on potential banner opportunities.
- Banners throughout district mapped; next steps include conversations with City staff on ownership and responsibility of banners.

NEWS UPDATE

- [Beloved downtown Kalamazoo bookstore to reopen for final sale](#)
- [New shuttle aims to connect WMU students to downtown Kalamazoo](#)
- [Kalamazoo wants to transform the 'spaghetti bowl' into a vibrant gateway to downtown](#)
- [Copper's Dog House, The Grazing Table stay downtown after dual-relocation](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Events & Marketing

- Reviewed final brand and advanced recommendation for approval



Holiday Events Incoming!

As the days get shorter and the lights get brighter, downtown Kalamazoo is gearing up for a season full of cheer, connection, and community.

- **Maple Hill Holiday Parade & After Parade Activities** | Nov. 22 at 11 a.m.
- **Tree Lighting Ceremony** | Nov. 28 5-7 p.m.
- **Shop Small Saturday** | Nov. 29
- **Santa's Workshop & Holly Jolly Trolley** | Launches Nov. 29
- **Gingerbread Wonderland** | Kicks off Dec. 5
- **Moonlight Madness** | Dec. 12

Strong & Sustainable

Downtown is backed by strong leadership—resilient in structure, bold in vision, and prepared for what’s next.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Strong & Sustainable

Conduct Capacity Audit

In progress

- Discussions with Executive Committee and City staff continue on additional staff to support the work of DDA/DEGA, including job description.

DDA Development Plan

Not started

COMMITTEE REPORT

Executive & Finance

- Reviewed November Board Agenda and Content.
- Discussed upcoming board member vacancies and process for filling vacancies.

Additional Updates

- **Downtown Snowmelt System.** Contractor delays in repairing the snowmelt system’s aging heat exchangers resulted in an unexpected outage heading into the holiday season. Repairs are now scheduled for November 25–26, and several businesses have expressed understandable concern about safety and accessibility. Ambassadors and Public Services are actively managing conditions with enhanced manual clearing and salting until the system returns online.
- **Farmer’s Alley Pedestrian Bridge.** The Farmers Alley pedestrian bridge has been temporarily closed following a site inspection that identified safety concerns. A timeline for reopening has not yet been determined. City staff is reviewing the issue to confirm the extent of repairs needed. Signage and barriers are in place to ensure public safety, and updates will be shared as more information becomes available.

TO: Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board of Directors

DATE: November 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Motion to Authorize the Board Chair to Amend and Extend the *Beats on Bates* Agreement with Guess Who's Dancing Fitness, LLC for a Period of One Year in Consultation with the Authority's Legal Counsel

SUMMARY

Since 2024, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) has partnered with Guess Who's Dancing Fitness, LLC to manage the *Beats on Bates* weekly music series. The program continues to deliver consistent and measurable benefits for local businesses and downtown vibrancy.

Placer.ai visitation analytics show a 17 percent year-over-year increase in Wednesday evening foot traffic in Bates Alley during the 2025 season (5–9 p.m.) compared to the same timeframe in 2024. Local establishments continue to report 15–25 percent higher sales on event nights relative to non-event Wednesdays. This sustained growth demonstrates the event's strong role in driving mid-week economic activity.

For 2026, staff recommends renewing the agreement for an additional one-year term with a \$50,000 budget. Based on the traditional event calendar, there are 18 weeks between the first Wednesday in June and the last Wednesday in September. To remain within the approved budget, the season may be shortened by one week if necessary.

BACKGROUND

The *Beats on Bates* concert series takes place Wednesday evenings from June through September and is managed under contract with Guess Who's Dancing Fitness, LLC. The initial 2024 agreement provided up to two successive one-year renewals subject to mutual written consent.

Over the past two seasons, the series has:

- Generated consistent, measurable downtown activity verified through Placer.ai analytics showing a steady increase in dwell time and repeat visitation during the 5 p.m.–9 p.m. window.
- Elevated visibility for local performers, with 16 bands and 6 rotating DJs in 2026.
- Strengthened partnerships among nearby restaurants, bars, and retailers, contributing to collaborative promotions and sustained mid-week momentum, as well as community partners including Honor Credit Union, Midwest Communications, Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, Discover Kalamazoo, KZEN, Black Arts and Cultural Center, Farmer's Insurance, The Kalamazoo Promise, Outfront Kalamazoo and more.

The 2025 series achieved record attendance, largely favorable weather conditions (four rain days), and high levels of community engagement, with feedback from businesses, sponsors, and attendees emphasizing the event's role as a signature downtown activation.

On November 5, the Downtown Coordinator and Kim Guess met to review the 2025 season results and discuss renewal for 2026. The Executive Committee subsequently reviewed and discussed a contract extension for the 2026 season.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Board Chair to amend and extend the *Beats on Bates* Agreement with Guess Who's Dancing Fitness, LLC for a period of one year (2026 season) in consultation with the Authority's legal counsel.



Downtown Economic Growth Authority Staff Report

City of Kalamazoo

TO: The Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board of Directors

FROM: Antonio Mitchell, Director of Community Planning and Economic Development

DATE: November 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Downtown Parking Plan Update

SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDATION:

DDA/DEGA MEETING SCHEDULE

2026

JANUARY

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

FEBRUARY

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

MARCH

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

APRIL

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

MAY

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

JUNE

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12

JULY

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

AUGUST

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

SEPTEMBER

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

OCTOBER

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

NOVEMBER

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

DECEMBER

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Board Meeting 3 pm
Executive/Finance Committee 2 pm
Events & Marketing Committee 11 am
Business Rec. and Ret. Committee 11 am
Clean & Green Committee 11 am

2025 DEGA / DDA BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Board Meetings

Typically Every Third Monday of the Month at 3 p.m.

Community Room at City Hall (241 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007)

- Monday, January 12 *
- Monday, February 16
- Monday, March 16
- Monday, April 20
- Monday, May 11 *
- Monday, June 15
- Monday, July 13 *
- Monday, August 17
- Monday, September 21
- Monday, October 19
- Monday, November 16
- Monday, December 21

Executive Committee

Typically Every Second Monday of the Month at 2 p.m.

Microsoft Teams

- Monday, January 5 *
- Monday, February 9
- Monday, March 9
- Monday, April 13
- Monday, May 4 *
- Monday, June 8
- Monday, July 6 *
- Monday, August 10
- Monday, September 14
- Monday, October 12
- Monday, November 9
- Monday, December 14

Events and Marketing Committee

Typically Every First Monday of the Month at 11 a.m..

Southwest Michigan First and Microsoft Teams

- Tuesday, January 6 *
- Monday, February 2
- Monday, March 2
- Monday, April 6
- Tuesday, May 5 *
- Monday, June 1
- Tuesday, July 7 *
- Monday, August 3
- Tuesday, September 8 *
- Monday, October 5
- Monday, November 2
- Monday, December 7

**Regular meeting date shifted due to holiday and/or scheduling conflict*

Clean and Green Committee

Typically Every Second Tuesday of the Month at 11 a.m..

Microsoft Teams

- Wednesday, January 7 *
- Tuesday, February 10
- Tuesday, March 10
- Tuesday, April 14
- Tuesday, May 12
- Tuesday, June 9
- Tuesday, July 14
- Tuesday, August 11
- Tuesday, September 15 *
- Tuesday, October 13
- Tuesday, November 10
- Tuesday, December 15

Business Recruitment and Retention Committee

Typically the Last Monday of the Month at 11 a.m..

Southwest Michigan First and Microsoft Teams

- Monday, January 26
- Monday, February 23
- Monday, March 30
- Monday, April 27
- Monday, May 25
- Monday, June 29
- Monday, July 27
- Monday, August 31
- Monday, September 28
- Monday, October 26
- Monday, November 30
- Monday, December 28

**Regular meeting date shifted due to holiday and/or scheduling conflict*